

Commission on Connecticut's Future

June 24, 2014
2:00-3:30pm
195 Prospect Street
New Haven, CT 06511
Kroon Hall, Room 319

Minutes

Committee Chair: Catherine Smith

Members Present: John Harrity, Henry Lowendorf, Richard McCombs, Sharon Palmer, Karl Prew, Eric Remington, Jeff Seemann

Special Guests: Mayor Toni Harp, Dr. Marian Chertow

- I. Welcome
- II. Dr. Marian Chertow's Presentation: "Technology for Connecticut's Future"
 - a. The importance of WWII
 - i. The innovation that happened to develop technology for the war led to decades of prosperous growth
 - ii. This first huge investment in scientific research led to innovations like Teflon, nylon, and the microwave
 - b. Defense technology trickles to commercial technology, but this pipeline is running dry
 - c. Difficulty of transitioning from defense because defense is incredibly specialized and commercial interests are rapidly changing
 - i. Defense works in a regulated market; commercial works in a high-speed, free market
 - d. 2011 Top 10 CT Defense contractors brought in \$12.6B in federal dollars
 - i. 75% for transportation; 11% for professional, scientific and technical
 - e. Imagining-Incubating-Demonstrating-Promoting-Sustaining
 - i. Getting from step to step is difficult part, that's where assistance is meaningful
 - f. Government/military is starting to see that energy can be a liability
 - i. Tethers missions to the base
 - ii. Increases risk of casualties
 - iii. Energy solutions can improve military and resource efficiency

- iv. There is increased overlap between national security, environmental and energy security, and environmental sustainability
 - v. There's a blending of the mission of defense and sustainable technology
 - vi. Convergence, not conversion
 - vii. We should build on established strengths
- g. Connecticut's Advantages:
 - i. Strong in education
 - ii. High quality of life
 - iii. Stable ecosystem/water

III. Discussion

- a. Connecticut also has some weaknesses: wind and hydro-electric
- b. Transportation and buildings are major energy users—we'd be better off if we cut back on energy sources, rather than find new sources
- c. Creating low energy cities through transit development
- d. How do we translate high level ideas to the ground in CT?
 - i. There's a huge opportunity in R&D
 - ii. The companies have to want to do it—a commission like this can nudge them
- e. We need a catalogue of what Connecticut is already doing
- f. Need to create an ecosystem of crossover and exchange
 - i. We have a lot of talent and knowledge, but it is stuck in the companies
- g. We need more coordination and alignment
- h. Need to promote diversity of people and ideas
- i. Possible other topics:
 - i. Transportation and energy: CEFIA, New American Foundation
 - ii. Inventory of the state: What are we making, what are the skills, how can we translate these things
 - iii. Education: imbedding innovation and creative thinking
 - iv. Entrepreneurship: ecosystem for start ups, moving capital from existing companies to new companies, Connecticut Innovations